The mission of the Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District (ATCPHD) is to “provide preventative services to promote community health”. Utilizing the values of professionalism, quality, integrity, innovation and collaboration our employees provide services to residents within Abilene, Taylor County and the other 18 surrounding counties that make up the Big Country.
Immunizations
The Immunization Clinic provides walk-in immunizations for individuals of all ages. Clients are seen on a first come, first serve basis and pricing varies. Tuberculosis (TB) testing, select travel vaccines and mandatory work and school vaccines are also available. Vaccine records can also be obtained if you are enrolled in the Texas Immtrac system or have received vaccines at ATCPHD. TB testing is only available on Mondays and Tuesdays. Extended hours until 6:00pm occur the first Tuesday of every month.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday 9:00am-11:45am & 1:00pm-4:00pm

**MORE INFO:** Please call (325) 692-5600

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Women’s Health

Cindy Hess, WHNP-BC

ATCPHD’s Women Health programs are located at MERCY Health Care Center. These programs include: Family Planning, Healthy Texas Women, Breast & Cervical Cancer Services (BCCS) and Prenatal Services. These programs can cover costs for annual well woman exams, mammograms, pap smears, birth control, walk-in pregnancy tests and more. MERCY can provide some of these services for self-paying clients who do not meet program eligibility criteria.

**MORE INFO:** Please call (325) 676-6634

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Abilene WIC

WIC, the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children, is an important resource in improving the health and nutrition of women, infants, and children during pregnancy and early childhood. WIC offers classes, children’s activities, cooking demonstrations, and personal attention from breastfeeding experts, along with helping mothers buy the foods they and their children need to stay healthy. WIC benefits are for pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and children up to the age of 5.

**MORE INFO:** Please call the Abilene WIC Office at (325) 692-1680
**STI Clinic**

MERCY’s STI clinic offers comprehensive sexual health care that includes: education, prevention, testing and treatment. The cost of testing is $20.00 and includes: HIV, Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia. Hepatitis C testing is also available for an additional $15.00. The clinic offers free STI testing on the first Monday of every month from 8:00-10:00am and 1:00-3:00pm on a walk-in basis. Free condoms are available at any time.

**HOURS:** Monday-Thursday beginning at 8:00am  
**MORE INFO:** Please call (325) 437-4963

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**PrEP & PEP**

ATCPHD’s PrEP and PEP programs are located at MERCY Health Care Center. PrEP is when HIV-negative people take an oral pill once a day before coming into contact with HIV. PrEP must be taken for at least 7-20 days to reach optimal levels of protection. PEP is when HIV-negative people take anti-HIV medications after coming into contact with HIV. PEP must be taken within 72 hours of exposure.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm  
**MORE INFO:** Call Melissa Holland, RN (325) 437-4963

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**Tuberculosis (TB) Program**

Tuberculosis, or TB, is a highly contagious disease. It is spread when an actively infected person coughs, sneezes or exhales into the air. It normally impacts the lungs but can affect other parts of the body too. TB can be deadly without appropriate treatment. ATCPHD’s TB Program provides education, monitoring, testing and treatment of TB.

**MORE INFO:** Call our TB nurse, Cindy Haas, LVN at (325) 437-4605
**Dental Program**
The ATCPHD Dental Program sees patients of all ages and provides a number of services such as comprehensive dental exams, cleanings, crowns, bridges, fillings, simple and surgical extractions and partial and complete dentures. Private pay appointments are as low as $150.00.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm  
**MORE INFO:** Please call our Dental Office at (325) 437-4620

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**Epidemiology**
ATCPHD's epidemiology program is responsible for the surveillance and reporting of infectious diseases in Taylor County. Our epidemiologists receive lab reports from hospitals, doctor's offices, clinics, schools and other agencies. Lab reports that meet specific criteria are investigated then reported to the state. Surveillance allows the state and our local epidemiologists to track infectious disease trends and outbreaks for our community. Tracking and educating the public about infectious diseases allows residents in Abilene and Taylor County to take the necessary steps to protect themselves.

**MORE INFO:** Call Wayne Rose, Lead Epidemiologist at (325) 676-6355

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**Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)**
Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) ensures that our community's health is protected during emergency situations such as natural disasters, infectious disease outbreaks, biohazards and pandemics. The PHEP Coordinator is vigilant in planning, preparation and training for these situations so that when a disaster strikes, our community can recover quickly. The PHEP program provides disaster preparedness education to the public and collaborates with local first responders, state agencies and other community partners to develop preparedness plans.

**Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**
The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a national group of volunteers that is organized on a local level. The MRC strengthens public health, supports emergency responses, and increases community resilience. The Greater Abilene MRC organizes and utilizes community volunteers who want to donate their time and expertise to prepare for and respond to emergencies and promote healthy living throughout the year.

**MORE INFO:** Visit [www.facebook.com/GreaterAbileneMRC/](http://www.facebook.com/GreaterAbileneMRC/) & [www.dshs.texas.gov/commprep/TexasMRC.aspx](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/commprep/TexasMRC.aspx)
Environmental Health

Environmental Health inspects a wide variety of establishments to protect the health and safety of our community. Establishments where they conduct inspections include, but are not limited to, retail food establishments, mobile food units, daycares, public pools and septic systems. Environmental Health also operates a vector control program. This program focuses on identification, prevention and control of mosquito-borne diseases as well as other vector-borne diseases.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm with weekend, after-hours, & emergency appointments as needed

**MORE INFO:** Call Terri Auger, Environmental Health Manager at (325) 437-4586

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Texas Healthy Communities

ATCPHD’s Texas Healthy Communities program assesses and promotes public health in our community by focusing on the following topics: physical activity, healthy food access, mother-friendly environments, healthy schools, healthy worksites, comprehensive tobacco control, cardiac and stroke response, healthcare quality, and healthy aging. Past projects have included the MERCY community garden, the Texas Healthy Communities walking trail guide and developing worksite wellness programs. The Texas Healthy Communities program also oversees the Live Well Coalition which works with community members, local agencies and organizations to educate, support and promote physical activity in Taylor County.

**MORE INFO:** Call Veronica Escalona at (325) 437-4604 & visit ATCPHD’s website at awlwabilenetx.gov
Laboratory Services
Diagnostic Testing
Diagnostic testing can help with detection, diagnosis, and treatment of illnesses and diseases. In order to utilize our diagnostic testing, you must have a doctor’s request or lab order. Cash and checks are the only accepted forms of payment. Lab draws are completed on a first come, first serve basis. Some testing may not be available on certain days/times so please call prior to your arrival.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday 8:00am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-3:30pm

Water Samples
ATCPHD's Laboratory is a NELAC-Accredited Laboratory that serves public water systems, commercial/vending water companies, and private individuals and entities. Our lab tests help determine the suitability of water for drinking. A sterile container can be obtained from the lab along with instructions and a submission form. Fees are $25.00 per sample. Cash and checks are the only accepted forms of payment.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday 8:00am-12:00pm & 1:00pm-4:00pm

**MORE INFO:** Please call (325) 437-4650

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Rabies Control & Prevention
ATCPHD's Rabies Control & Prevention program can help you obtain rabies medication, when prescribed by a physician. ATCPHD's Rabies Program does not provide medical care for wounds. If you have been scratched, bitten, or have had an exposure to an animal which you feel may have had rabies, go to your nearest hospital, emergency room or visit your primary care physician to receive a medical evaluation. After seeking medical attention and receiving a prescription, ATCPHD can help you obtain rabies medication by appointment only. Medications can be started within 10 days of suspected or confirmed rabies exposure.

If you've been bitten by or have an encounter with an aggressive stray or wild animal, please report the incident to animal control after receiving medical care:

**EMERGENCY DISPATCH:** (325) 698-0085

**AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY:** (325) 673-8331

**ONLINE:** abilenetx.gov/seeclickfix

Due to the Rabies virus being present in our region, all animal bites, domestic, stray or wild, should be reported to the state. If you suspect you were exposed to rabies, please contact State Zoonosis before accepting any Rabies Post Exposure Vaccines. Call Nick Ferguson, State Health Services-Zoonosis at 325-795-5857 or after hours/weekends at 325-261-2684.

**MORE INFO:** Please call Brandie Walsh at (325) 692-5600 or visit dshs.texas.gov/idcu/disease/rabies/information/facts
The refugee program offers services to protect and improve the health of newly arrived refugees. This is accomplished by providing an initial, comprehensive medical screening, immunizations and health education. In the future, refugee clients can receive other preventive medical screenings, nursing care and continued health education.

Texas Physical Activity & Nutrition (TXPAN) Program

The Texas Physical Activity and Nutrition (TXPAN) Program is ATCPHD’s latest grant program. ATCPHD is working on evidence-based strategies to: (1) increase physical activity and nutrition in childcare facilities; (2) increase access to lactation rooms in City of Abilene facilities; (3) increase the availability of healthy foods from food vendors; and (4) advocate for changes in our built-environment that promote the health of our residents. The goals of this program are to increase physical activity and nutrition which will reduce the risk of obesity and the development of chronic diseases in our community.

Refugee Program

The refugee program offers services to protect and improve the health of newly arrived refugees. This is accomplished by providing an initial, comprehensive medical screening, immunizations and health education. In the future, refugee clients can receive other preventive medical screenings, nursing care and continued health education.

Primary Health Care & Texas Health Steps

Sara Wilcox, RN, FNP-C

ATCPHD’s Primary Health Care (PHC) and Texas Health Steps programs are located at MERCY Health Care Center. The Primary Health Care program provides eligible adults and children with yearly exams and treatment for a variety of medical conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Texas Health Steps provides primary healthcare services for children ages 0-20 years old that have Medicaid. Both programs have specific eligibility criteria.

HOURS: Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm
MORE INFO: Please call the MERCY Clinic at (325) 676-6634
Our Vital Statistics
Our Vital Statistics office files, stores and protects our birth and death certificates. Texas birth certificates and Abilene death certificates are available for purchase by qualified applicants only. Valid identification and payment in the form of cash, check or money order are required. Walk-in services are available.

**HOURS:** Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm
**MORE INFO:** Please call our Local Registrar at (325) 692-5600

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**Our Health Authority**
Dr. Peter Norton, M.D. OBGYN

ATCPHD’s Health Authority is Dr. Peter Norton, M.D., OBGYN. Our health authority provides medical oversight for our clinics. As an officer of the state, he reports public health issues to local and state authorities. He is also responsible for establishing and enforcing laws that protect the health of the public.

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**Our Director**
Annette Lerma

Ms. Lerma oversees a staff of 60 employees along with the responsibility of programming and financial management of eighteen programs offering various medical and nutrition services, environmental health, vital statistics, public health emergency preparedness, and the MERCY Health Care Center.